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COPY.

Sent. to Mr. agent McKinnis for
his information - vide last paragraph

Wm. H. Reed
Comms

Regina, 15th June, 1893.

Sir:-

Referring to your letter of the 17th April last, I beg to inform you that there never has been any legal authority for compelling Indians who leave their Reserves to return to them, but it has always been felt that it would be a great mistake in this matter to stand too strictly on the letter of the law.

So long as this course is followed in the interests of the Indians themselves, a benefit rather than a wrong is done them, and when so much more than they were promised by Treaty stipulations, is done with a view to enabling them to provide for themselves, they certainly have no just cause to complain, if the Department insists upon their remaining at home in order that the advantages secured at so great a cost may not be thrown away.

Moved by these considerations, I have never hesitated to take such risk as there may have been in employing the Police to send Indians back when I felt the circumstances rendered such course advisable, but I have always impressed upon the Police the necessity for acting with caution and presenting a sufficiently strong front.

in

1893
The Indian Agent,
Carlton P. O.,
Sask.

Wm. H. Reed

in the first instance, to reduce the possibility of resistance being offered to a minimum.

Unfortunately however, the Police Department has become alarmed about the risk of assuming its share of responsibility, and orders have been issued to members of the force not to do more than request Indians to return to their Reserves, but of course if they can do nothing more it would not be advisable to call upon them to do what would only draw the Indians' attention to the fact that they have not the power to enforce their requests.

I am now in communication with the Department, as to what should be done in the matter, and pending the result, all we can do is to endeavour to keep the true position from the Indians as long as possible, although the matter having been handled with so little secrecy that it has been referred to in the public press, precludes the hope of our being able to do so for long.

Referring to what you say about having to find work for Indians if kept on the Reserve, and paying them in provisions, I am somewhat surprised at the apparent necessity for reminding you that it is entirely opposed to our policy to pay Indians for working. Indians should be kept at work for themselves, and if in the course of reaching a footing of independence they are actually in want, the absolutely necessary assistance in provisions should be given them, and they can reasonably and should be required to do what they can towards the maintenance of an Agency which exists for their own benefit.

Since

Since you said when visiting here, that Mr. Agent McKensie desired to be advised about employment of Police in the direction herein indicated, a copy of this letter is being sent to him.

I am, Sir,

Yours obediently,

(sgd) Hayter Reed

Commissioner.